

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1843
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4214

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, PEPR, RH, US
SUBJECT: SA EDITORIAL ON HELMS AMENDMENT

DEPARTMENT MAY BE INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING EDITORIAL WHICH
APPEARED ON JULY 24 IN THE PRETORIA NEWS, A LIBERAL ARGUS
GROUP DAILY:

BEGIN TEXT: US AT THE HELMS

THE RHODESIAN ECONOMY, SO LONG UNDER SIEGE, WOULD BE
TREMENDOUSLY BOOSTED IF SENATOR JESSE HELMS SUCCEEDS THIS WEEK
IN PERSUADING THE UNITED STATES SENATE TO LIFT TRADE SANCTIONS
AGAINST THE COUNTRY UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR. THE
QUESTION, HOWEVER, IS REALLY WHETHER SUCH A MOVE WOULD HELP
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RHODESIA AS MUCH IN THE LONGER TERM AS IT WOULD IMMEDIATELY.

FROM THE NARROW DEFEAT OF HELMS PREVIOUS ATTEMPT
A FEW WEEKS AGO, IT IS CLEAR THAT AMERICAN SOCIETY IS
BEGINNING TO MOVE INTO GREATER SYMPATHY WITH RHODESIA'S
INTERIM GOVERNMENT, OR IS POSSIBLY SHOWING GROWING ABHORRENCE
OF PATRIOTIC FRONT GUERRILLA ATROCITIES.

TO LIFT SANCTIONS NOW WOULD BE A GESTURE OF AMERICAN TRUST THAT THE RHODESIAN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WILL CARRY THROUGH THE PROGRAMME OF TRANSFERRING POWER TO BLACK MAJORITY RULE WITHOUT ANY HITCHES, BUT UNFORTUNATELY IT WOULD NOT STOP THE WAR. IT COULD WELL MAKE THE CONFRONTATION TOUGHER, GIVING THE VIOLENT STRUGGLE FOR POWER ANOTHER HORRIFIC BOOST.

FOR THE UNITED STATES TO LIFT SANCTION NOW WOULD BE TO THUMB ITS NOSE AT THE UNITED NATIONS, THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY AND THE FRONT-LINE STATES IN A WAY WHICH COULD DESTROY WESTERN BONA FIDES AS AN HONEST BROKER BETWEEN THE WARRING PARTIES. THE DILEMMA FACING THE US. SENATE THIS WEEK IS WHETHER TO RECOGNISE RHODESIA'S INTERNAL PROGRESS BY DROPPING SANCTIONS, OR TO USE THAT PROGRESS AS AN ARGUMENT TO PERSUADE THE OAU AND FRONT-LINE STATES TO SHIFT THEIR GROUND AND PUT REAL PRESSURE ON THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO TALK RATHER THAN SHOOT. END TEXT.
EDMONDSON

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